

## Some notes on the Kelantan Dialect, and some comparisons with the Dialects of Perak and Central Pahang.

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The variations and differences of dialect are of course found in

1. Vocabulary.
2. Pronunciation.
3. Distinct usages of word and phrase.

1. Vocabulary.

In this respect the dialects of Perak and Pahang are little different: the Kelantan dialect differs widely from both. Taking in the first place the personal pronouns,

(a) "I" is in Perak	sahaya
	tëman
	aku.
in Pahang	sahaya
	kawan (colloquially).
in Kelantan	sahaya
	hamba (most common colloquially).

Thus the word "sahaya" is found in all three dialects, but its use in Kelantan is very uncommon indeed, so uncommon that it is probably an imported word. It is useful as a polite and less humiliating variant to "hamba" when an inferior is addressed. The word "tëman" is unknown in Kelantan: and "kawan," though found, is clearly an importation from Pahang.

In the written language "beta" is used in Perak, "sahaya" and "kita" in Pahang, and "kita" in Kelantan. Of course this is not a rule without exception: for as the customs and language of the more advanced West become known in Kota Bharu, so the variants of the other states are found gradually to creep in, both the written and spoken dialect. Perak is acknowledged to be the leader of fashion and to be worthy of imitation in most respects.

(b) "You" is Perak in	mika
	kamu.
in Pahang	awak.
in Kelantan	kita (polite).
	diri
	mu (much as kamu is Perak).
	kamu (which is coarse).

This use of kita may be common to the Northern States, but it has not come to my notice except in Kelantan. "Diri" is also quite commonly used: and "mu," rather coarse, is purely colloquial, and

would always be used in conversation with inferiors and young people.

(c) He, She etc. The Malay expressions are the same in all three dialects:—but in Perak and Kelantan “*dia-ma*” colloquially pronounced “*deema*,” is the ordinary plural. In Pahang I never once heard this expression. In Perak only have I noticed similar forms in the first and second persons, as “*sahaya-ma*” and “*kamu-ma*.”

In comparing the dialects of Perak and Pahang as regards differences of vocabulary, these, I think, are comparatively few. In Pahang we find the word “*molek*” in common use, where both “*elok*” and “*chantek*” are used in Perak: “*sələlu*” is found where in Perak “*langsong*” is employed: and the use of “*rajin*” is common where in Perak “*sələlu*” is the expression found, *e.g.*, “*ta’ rajin*” means “never.” The most common expression in Pahang for “every” is “*sa-bilang*,” *e.g.*, “*sa-bilang hari*” which means “every day.” “Often” in Pahang is “*kėrap*,” usually “*kėrap kali*”: in Perak we find “*galak*” or “*galak kali*” employed: while in Kelantan again we find the expression to be “*achap*” or “*achap kali*.” In Pahang, instead of the expression “*punya*” signifying possession, the Arabic “*hak*,” literally meaning “possession” or “property” is used: and it frequently takes the place of “*yang*” (relative pronoun) as well. Only in Pahang have I heard the word “*chamchah*” used for “spoon:” and in Pahang and Kelantan the word “*sėrampang*” for “fork.” The word “*lalu*” in Pahang has an adverbial use as well as its ordinary signification, *viz.*, meaning “absolutely,” *e.g.*, “*ta’ guna lalu*,” meaning “absolutely no good:” “*habis lalu*,” “absolutely finished.” “*Amat*” is generally used in Pahang where in Perak “*tėrlampau*,” “*sangat*,” or “*sakali*” would be used. To intensify “*amat*,” “*sangat*” is added.

The Kelantan dialect differs widely from both Perak and Pahang dialects. It is the least pure of all the Malay dialects I know, and intermingled with Siamese and even Chinese expressions, though the latter are comparatively few. There are many other alleged Malay words, which as far as my experience goes, belong to Kelantan alone, though it is possible that they are used in other Northern Malay States. I have mentioned the personal pronouns, and in this connection I must not forget to state that the word “*awak*” for “you” is accepted as being quite polite, but no Kelantan Malay cares to be addressed as “*kamu*.” It may be for this reason that Court charges always employ the expression “*kamu!*” “*Hamba*” is practically the one colloquial word for “I” as is *kita* in written form.

I give a list of Kelantan words with meanings as types of the difference in dialect.

<i>English or Malay.</i>	<i>Kelantan Malay.</i>
To see	Kleh, bėrgari.
To hasten	hunggal
List	sėnarai
To take census; make a list	sėnaraikan

Notice, notification	pěrwawai
To be unwilling	ta' ser (only used in negative)
To weep	těriak (seldom tangis)
Foolish (bodoh)	babok
Mattress	lembek
To petition	měngěting or měngenting
Pěnghulu	To' kwěng
Lawyer	pěnghulu
sěmpadan	tapang; měntara
The late (deceased)	gěmolah
běrsilat	gayong
Feast for dead	bewah
janda	bujang
tin (receptacle)	kopi
gila	gong
plan-plahan	kohor
capture	egat or egak
appeal (against a Court decision)	utun
Court case	guaman or bichara
Criminal case	bichara jěnaiah
Civil	bichara mal
Party to a case	anak guaman
To be party to a case	běrguam
To give judgment	kěrat bichara
A judgment	kěrat
gaol	gok
dukong	kekong
balek	kělik, kělit
a cent, a piece	měnunggal
marah	mureh
kěrani	sěmayan
throw, champak	těhok
now	loh ini
quickly (at once)	lolor-lolor
many	{ sangkang: bėlanar :
	{ chěmak
proud	pongah
shaky with fear	kěnaling
batas (large with a path on top)	tandak
těngkolok	satangan (form saputangan uncommon.)
money	pitis (lit. the small leaden coin worth \$1/480.)
mělěngong	těrchokoh
manggis	města
jambu golok	kětiri
mata kuching (fruit)	gědu-gědik
kundang (fruit)	sětar
lada hitam	lada bėnang

silau (of sun)	běchar
makan jamuan	panggilan
pěda	buđu
buah kětapi	kěchapi
aran	tamban
kraiong	něring
sirat jala	jahit jala
sěgar	siar
jalor tanah	ruangan, or wangan tanah
hělėhas	jěrėjak
to suckle	mai (pron. with nasal accent)
kěrol	bojing
sireh sa-kapur	sireh těmat
" "	sireh sa-piak
měminang orang	bawa sireh
pagar těnggalong	pagar musang
matches	pěnggesek api
" , to light	kechek
korang hěrti	korang chėrak
měnchėpar	mějėriat
notice, to affix	tepek
finger-print	tepek tangan

I give these as examples, compiled, as will be seen, without system, just as they occurred to me or were brought to my notice. I can give many more if required. The examples which I know to be Siamese are jėnaiah, utun, kweng, guam, and also such words as "wat" a Siamese temple; "sam" a Siamese Court-house; "sėmayan," a clerk: and I suspect also that sėnarai, gong, gok, and others are of Siamese origin. The Chinese negative "bo" is in quite common use.

II. Pronunciation. I should be inclined to put the dialect of Pahang, Central Pahang at least, first as regards normality of pronunciation.

the final—ar pronounced as	—or, as in bėsar bėnar
	pron. as bėsor bėnor.
" " —ul " "	—uĩ, as in bėtul, pron.
	bėtuĩ.
" " —us " "	—oė, as in bagus pron.
	bagoė.
" " —ir " "	—ior, as in hilir, pron.
	elior.
the final—a pronounced as	—ė, as in mana pron. as
	manė, or as the French
	—eu.
" —al " "	—ai, as gatal, pron. gatai.

The Pahang dialect is spoken almost as written, though a few a few eccentricities may be noted. Final—l is slurred over but is not absolutely mispronounced as in Perak. Thus the word "gatal" is pronounced almost as "gata:" but the impression is left of some-

thing more than "gata," as if the tongue were trying to overcome the difficulties of the final—l, and just failed to do so. The final ai and-au are also slurred, and are pronounced almost as--a. They approach therefore towards the pronunciation of the final which explains why we sometimes hear of a sungal or a kēdal when a sungai or a kēdai is meant.

Kelantan pronunciation is eccentric in a different direction from both the Perak and the Pahang dialects.

1. Suppression of—n before another consonant: *e.g.*, Kēlantan is pronounced Kēlatan; jantan is pronounced jatan. Similarly bangu is pronounced baku, and bēngkak, bēkak. Here again the impression is left of almost futile striving to pronounce the word in full. On the other hand—n and—ng are frequently inserted in writing where their use is incorrect and superfluous, *e.g.*, bēngkas for bēkas; this error is only found in writing, and is possibly due to the knowledge of the opposite fault and to a desire to avoid it at all costs.

2. Suppression of—m—in a similar way, again with the counter-error in writing, *e.g.*, tēpoh for tēmboh: tapar for tampar: tēpek for tēmpek.

3. Final—an pronounced as—en, *e.g.*, Kēlaten for Kēlantan; tuen for tuan. The—n is very nasal. Similarly—ang is pronounced—eng, *e.g.*, Paheng for Pahang.

4. Final -a pronounced as -aw, as in the English word "law," *e.g.*, manaw, apaw, for mana, apa. Similarly, -ah is pronounced as -awh, *e.g.*, timawh, lelawh: and -ak as -awk, *e.g.*, Perawk, awawk, kakawk.

5. Final -t, -k, and -p are practically indeterminate. In the case of a word such as "achap" it is impossible to tell from the spoken word whether it is really "achap," "achat," or "achak." The word is generally written "achap," and so I assume that form to be correct. Again I am unable to determine whether the word meaning "to return" is "kelik" or "kelit." I presume the former to be correct, on the analogy of "balek," but as spoken it appears to my ears more to resemble the second form given. This confusion does not always exist, however: it only presents itself in, comparatively speaking, a few cases, but the fact that it exists at all seems to be worth nothing.

6. Final -ng is frequently softened into -m, I find a good example of this error in the Malay programme of Sports held in Kota Bharu on the occasion of the Coronation of the present King. The sentence occurs, "Jika tiada pakaian seperti yang tersebut itu, memadai-lah dengan baju hitam leher tutup, dan seluar hitam kain sarom sutera atau bugis atau Trengganu chorak hitam diatas lutut" "I have frequently heard blakam used for blakang and even tuam for tuan. In this case again we find mistakes occurring in the opposite direction: for one regularly finds the word "belum" pronounced and even spelt as "bēlong." The latter error is readily explained by the nasal pronunciation prevalent in Kelantan: the former is no doubt the result of revolt against the

contrary error. An interesting example of the difficulty caused by the peculiarities of the spoken dialects of the Northern States is that mentioned by Mr. E. W. Birch in one of his articles to the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Straits Branch. In this article he mentions a discussion between himself, Mr. Hubert Berkeley, and the Dato Sri Adika Raja on the meaning of the name Klian Intan. The discussion was as to whether the name was originally Intan or Hitam. It is a matter which can never be decided, as in Kelantan at least there would be no difference in the pronunciation of the two words. The first -n of Intan would not be pronounced, and the first syllable would be undistinguishable from the first syllable of Hitam; while the nasal pronunciation of the finals -am and -an would be exactly similar.

7. Final -h is frequently pronounced as -s, *e.g.*, putes for puteh galas for galah, tujos for tujoh. I have noticed this in Perak; but there the tendency is rather to slur the final -s and make it approximate the sound of the final -h.

The Kelantan dialect has some curious clipped terminal affixes, tagged on at the end of words, phrases, and even sentences. *e.g.*, -dik or -dek often at the end of an exclamation or interrogation. No one appears to be able to explain it.

-gak is perhaps the most frequently used of all. It seems to be an intensive, but to possess little real signification or none at all. I have heard when playing sepak raga the phrase used, "Buleh Haji gak," intended to call the attention of the Haji in question to the fact that the raga had come to his foot. Again I have heard the phrase "Mari gak" used as a polite invitation.

-teh is another intensive. When used with an adjective, as "murah teh," "molek teh," it acquires something of the meaning of "bënar."

Another and even more curious expression is "keneh" I do not know what it means; so I shall merely give the example of its use quoted to me. It is as follows:—

"Balah 'tu keneh?'" and is interpreted to mean "Bagitu-kah?" It is not only used in interrogation, however, as it would also be used in expressing agreement with the opinion of another person. So that the same phrase "Balah 'tu keneh,'" without the interrogation would simply mean "You are quite right." One informant told me that it was chiefly used in anger, but that is not so, and I only mention this fact to show how difficult it is to get a credible explanation of many of these obscure terms.

A combination which I have found only in Kelantan is formed of the term "sa-rupa" followed by the expression "lek-lek," the word denoting the object of the simile intervening. "Lek-lek" seems to add nothing to the meaning of "sa-rupa," but simply to be an addition repeating without intensifying the signification. It may, however, have the meaning of "exactly" *e.g.*, "sa-rupa barimau lek-lek," which perhaps means "just like a tiger;" but so far as I know, it does not modify in any way the preceding phrase.

A phrase "lolor-lolor" which means "at once" may be akin "loh" as found in "loh ini," the Kelantan expression for "now." The interjectory "loh-lah" means "come on;" and I believe that these phrases are all derived from a common root.

Other phrases worthy of note are

siat gak,	which means	jangan-lah (not with a verb)
tiada sa-kēteh habok	„	tiada lalu
		<i>i.e.</i> there is none at all.
Balar-lah		no matter; tidak apa
sut dah		it is finished

These notes do not profess to be exhaustive, or to deal fully with any aspect whatever of the Kelantan dialects: nor do I make any claim to have discovered anything that was unknown previously. I have avoided words and phrases which are not in common use, and such as, being technical might not be known to any European in Kelantan. The compilation of the latter is secondary both in point of time and of importance. I have spelt many of the words phonetically as they sounded to my ear: and in many cases, as I have pointed out, the spelling is doubtful. My object, however will be attained if the publication of these notes induces others to set down and publish the result of their observations. In this way alone can a solution be found for many of the difficulties in form and spelling which now exist.